

## **Report of the Environment and Energy Committee April 21, 2014**

The recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated that “without reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, impacts from global warming could get out of control, and the risks have risen.” The World Bank Report “Turn Down the Heat” describes what the world would be like if it is warmed by 4 degrees Celsius, and warns that this is what scientists are predicting by the end of the century. **Earth Day 2014**, April 22, will focus on green cities, mobilizing millions of people to create a sustainable, healthy environment by greening communities worldwide.

Becoming a green community is the focus of the Environment and Energy Committee. The Committee’s overarching goal is to reduce the environmental footprint of Chevy Chase Village and its operations by conserving energy, reducing pollution and waste, enhancing our urban forest and green space, reducing noise pollution and runoff, and greening our landscaping practices. We want to raise awareness of these issues by sponsoring lectures and working with neighboring communities to share good practices.

### **Committee Membership**

Marilyn Bracken and Marea Hatziolos Grant, Co-Chairs

Members include Valery Amiel, Oliver Davidson, Susie Eig, Larry Heilman, Amanda Jacobs, Christoher Knopes, Jonathan Lyons, Diane Pape, Craig Van Note, Betsy Stephens, Ralph Stephens, Jay Treadwell

### **Activities in 2013.**

- Energy Efficiency --dissemination of information to Village residents through the Crier about opportunities to increase household energy efficiency through subsidized audits and home improvements sponsored by PEPCO, the US Department of Energy and the Maryland Department of Energy, and on energy and cost saving lighting in the Village Hall through use of LED bulbs.
- Green Energy—alerting Village residents through the Crier and Chevy Chase Village List-serve of ways to access more competitive rates for wind power through block sign-ups via organizations like Groundswell, who leverage bundled consumer demand from neighboring communities to negotiate lower rates with green energy providers to PEPCO
- Landscaping—assisting the Village staff with the landscaping contractor on alternatives to toxic chemicals used on village parks and open spaces.
- Recycling and Hazardous Waste -- Recycling in the Village increased approximately 20% this year. Larger household recycling bins will encourage residents to recycle more. Recycling remains one of the most effective ways to reduce negative impacts on our environment. Recycling is costly;

therefore, it is more effective to buy from producers who have reduced their packaging.

- Composting-- An article was prepared for the Crier giving guidance on composting and use of appropriate equipment
- Open Space Committee for the Western Grove Park Plan--Input has been provided by the Environment and Energy Committee
- Bethesda Green and Networking with Neighboring Communities--our committee members participate with other local communities in identifying good practices and exchanging ideas on how to reduce our environmental footprint in a variety of areas.

## **Activities and Emphasis in 2014**

### **Three focus areas:**

The Environment and Energy Committee agreed to focus its efforts around three main themes in 2014. These have the potential to help us reduce our carbon footprint now while achieving cost savings in the longer term:

- Energy Efficiency and Conservation (both at the residential household level and at the Village Hall)
- Green Energy
- Recycling and Compositing

To promote energy efficiency and conservation, the Committee will work with PEPCO to make home energy audits and rebates for improvements more accessible to Village residents through greater information and outreach. It will also follow up on recommendations contained in a 2009 audit of the Village Hall approved by Village Managers to make lighting and heating more efficient. Similarly, the Committee will work with the Board to explore subsidies and cost-effective options for a solar photovoltaic array on the roof of the Village Hall that would serve as a Green Energy demonstration project for the Village and surrounding communities. The Committee would also help residents who wish to source up to 100% of their electricity from wind power and other renewable forms of energy at competitive rates through groups like Groundswell.

On recycling and composting, the Committee will continue to work with residents and Village Managers on ways to reduce trash and the costs associated with waste processing, while promoting a more sustainable community. Please send ideas and questions to the Committee.

### **Other Activities**

- Continuing interest in supporting the Tree Committee in developing and documenting the Village tree canopy and the services it provides.
- Lecture Series on sustainable communities
- Additional CRIER articles, e.g., Dark Sky Initiative to reducing light pollution

- through smart lighting; reducing run-off from property and protecting drainage and receiving water; etc.
- Focusing on reducing pollution in the Village (noise, black carbon and particulate matter) from two stoke engines.

The Committee requests that a member of the Board of Managers be appointed as a Liaison to the Committee to facilitate two-way communication and clarification on the Committee's role as an advisory body to the Board in addition to being responsive to the Board's needs.

Submitted by the Environment and Energy Committee  
April 10, 2014